

## Remote Working Arrangements – Guidance for Line Managers

The purpose of this document is to provide Line Managers (in consultation with Head of Work Unit) guidance on the considerations to support (or otherwise) a Remote Working Arrangement.

### Are Remote Working Arrangements an option for JCU Staff?

Yes, JCU recognises the importance of, and benefits of, Remote Working Arrangements (RWA) in the attraction and retention of staff. That said however, working remotely is not an automatic entitlement and each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The RWA must not detract from the student or service focus of a Staff Member's role. In addition, some roles are more appropriately performed onsite (e.g. campus), and therefore may be unsuitable for an RWA. Varying arrangements will be in place across JCU, depending on the nature of the role, the location of the role and the needs of both the Work Unit and the staff within it. Normally student and/or customer facing roles (e.g. staff who cover reception counters) will be required to be on campus, however Work Units may find ways to accommodate individual requests while still ensuring adequate services are maintained. The Line Manager should consult with the Head of Work Unit and must consider their genuine operational needs of and for their Work Unit, before determining whether an RWA is to be approved.

### Suggested considerations for the Head of Work Unit & Line Managers

When considering whether or not a Remote Working Arrangement for an individual Staff Member (or team of Staff Members) is an option for their Work Unit, Line Managers (in consultation with Head of Work Unit) should consider the following questions:

- What are the *genuine operational requirements* of the Division/College/Institute/Centre/Directorate and in turn, the work of a Staff Member?
- Is the role that the Staff Member is performing more appropriately carried out on campus?
  - For instance, do they require face to face interaction with stakeholders (including students, client groups, contractors or other Staff Members)?
  - Do they require a high degree of supervision?
  - Do they require access to on-campus material, systems or resources?
  - Do they service the University's physical assets?
- Has the Staff Member completed all mandatory online WHS training modules?
- Does the Staff Member have appropriate technology and a suitable, safe, work place to work remotely?
  - Familiarise with the Safety Checklist to assist with your determination
  - Is there a known risk of domestic and/or family violence?
  - Consider caring responsibilities, noting that an RWA should not replace current caring measures already in place, and that the RWA can be rescinded if the Staff Member utilises the arrangement for substitution of caring purposes.
- Consideration should be given to the Staff Member's suitability to work at home. The Staff Member must be able to work as efficiently and effectively as if the Staff Member was on campus. Relevant factors in assessing this will include:
  - Demonstration of self-motivation, time-management and organisational skills;
  - Capacity to work independently;
  - A current Performance Development Plan; and
  - Demonstrated satisfactory performance against performance indicators.
- Does the Line Manager require any assistance to manage a Staff Member working remotely?
  - A range of resources and online training materials are available here: <https://www.jcu.edu.au/human-resources/learning-and-development/face-to-face-training>
  - Also, consider speaking with other Line Managers who have experience managing remote staff.

### Having the conversation with your Staff Member

While it is important to plan the conversation, it should be natural and authentic. The conversation should be focused on exploring what the Staff Member is seeking as well as discussing the genuine operational requirements

including any challenges that have been identified. For some Staff Members working remotely (part-time or full-time) may not be possible now due to technological or other challenges.

It's important that if Remote Working is possible, reviews should occur to ensure that it continues to meet genuine operational requirements, and to monitor the success (or otherwise) of the arrangement for the Staff Member. Discussion should occur around how long the arrangement will be in place and when it will be reviewed. It is suggested that RWAs are reviewed initially at 3 months, followed by annual reviews (as part of the PDP discussion), or, more frequently if necessary.

It's also important to ensure that the Staff Member understands that there may be times where attendance on campus is required despite an approved RWA being in place (such as for attending meetings or JCU-led events on campus, attending laboratories and research facilities, conducting any research, teaching, administrative, or other activities, supporting student engagement and/or meeting government or industry client commitments).

Finally, it is important to ensure that the Staff Member understands that costs of implementing the RWA will be borne by the Staff Member. This includes (but is not limited to) travel costs, internet and other home office costs and computer equipment.

### **Where Remote Working is an option**

Where the Line Manager has consulted with the Head of Work Unit, and it is agreed that remote working proves advantageous for both the Staff Member and the Work Unit, arrangements should be formalised for this to occur. All arrangements should be documented via the Remote *Working Arrangement and Safety Checklist* which can be accessed through the HR catalogue on ServiceNow. The Staff Member is to initiate the application process which gets forwarded to the Line Manager for approval. If approved, the RWA then gets forwarded to the Head of Work Unit for a secondary approval.

### **Where Remote Working is not an option**

Where it is determined that remote working is not an option this should be communicated (in writing) to the Staff Member including the reasons for the decision. The reasons for decision must be entered into the RWA request form on ServiceNow prior to declining the request. Where a Staff Member has a grievance about the decision regarding their individual circumstances, they should attempt to resolve this with their Line Manager or follow the [grievance process](#).

### **RWA Review and Renewal**

It is recommended that RWAs be in place for between 3-12 months to allow for regular review of the arrangement by the Staff Member and their Line Manager. The process to review and renew the RWA is short and is to be initiated by the Staff Member through the HR catalogue on ServiceNow. Once submitted, the RWA renewal is forwarded to the Line Manager for approval. When considering the approval of an extended RWA, the Line Manager should consider the following:

- Impact to the student/service focus
- Impact to the work unit
- Individual suitability and work output
- Any new safety/wellbeing hazards

### **Terminating a Remote Working Arrangement**

All RWAs are temporary and can be terminated at any time by either the Staff Member or the Line Manager. The RWA Termination form can be accessed through the HR catalogue on ServiceNow. When considering whether a Remote Working Arrangement for an individual Staff Member (or team of Staff) should be terminated, Line Managers (in consultation with their Head of Work Unit) should consider the following and provide their reasoning on the RWA Termination form:

- Impact to the student/service focus
- Impact to the work unit

- Individual suitability and work output
- Any new safety/wellbeing hazards

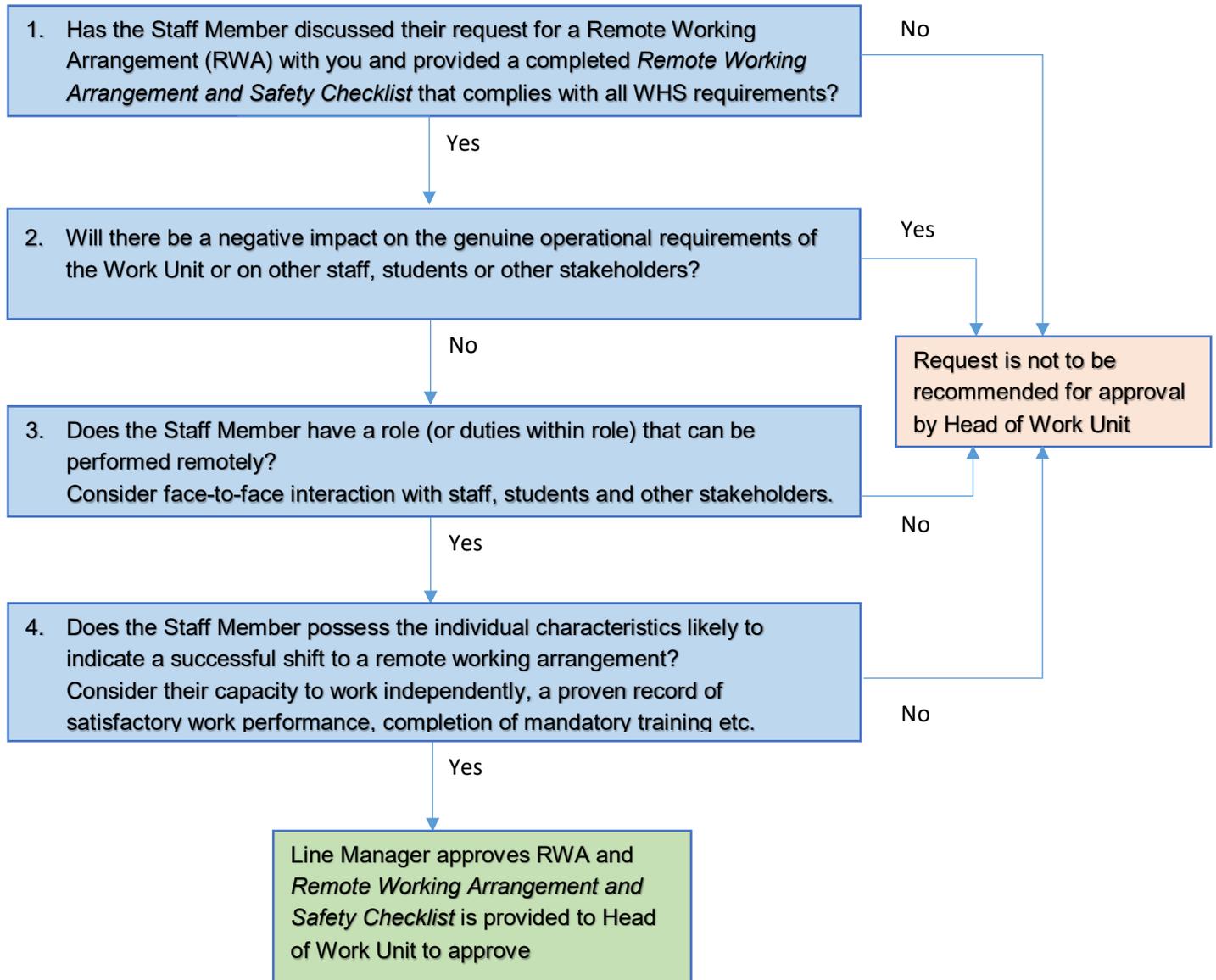
It is also important to ensure that appropriate notice is provided when terminating an RWA. Whilst the University will attempt to provide four (4) weeks' notice, there may be instances whereby the notice period may be less than this.

### **Reference Documents**

The following documents may be of some assistance:

[2016 JCU Enterprise Agreement](#)

# Remote Working Decision Tree for Line Managers



## Following Approval by Line Manager and Head of Work Unit

- Ensure a ServiceNow Request is completed if the Staff Member doesn't have a flexible computing solution (Refer to Procedure)
- Submit the approved *Remote Working Arrangement and Safety Checklist* via ServiceNow
- Schedule a meeting in your calendar to discuss and review the success of the arrangement with your Staff Member (e.g. in 3 months' time)